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UNCLAS MADRID 003251

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT PASS TO EUR/WE, G/TIP FOR JENNIFER DONNELLY,
CA/FPP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KWMN](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [SP](#)

SUBJECT: SPANISH AUTHORITIES DISRUPT CHINESE HUMAN
SMUGGLING RING

11. (U) On September 9, the Spanish National Police (SNP) arrested 14 Chinese citizens, five of them women, in connection with a human smuggling ring whose goal was to transfer women from China to South Africa and the Western Hemisphere for prostitution. The smuggling ring transferred Chinese women to Spain, utilizing fraudulent passports and false Schengen entry stamps. Once in Spain, they were held in small apartments until they were transferred to Mexico, Canada and South Africa in groups of four, three times a week. During the course of the arrests, the SNP seized 14 fake passports (three from Hong Kong, four from Japan, five from Singapore, one from Malaysia and one from Great Britain), as well as three false entry and exit stamps from Schengen border entry posts. The ring reportedly received regular payments via courier, estimated to exceed EUR 150,000 (195,000 USD) over the past several months, from sources in China to cover expenses associated with the transfer of the women. Once transferred, the women were forced to work in manual labor or prostitution to repay their debt, estimated to be approximately EUR 20,000 (26,000 USD).

12. (SBU) Poloff spoke with Carlos Botran, Chief of the Immigration Networks Office at the General Directorate of Police, about the smuggling arrests. Botran stated that the GOS had received information about the smuggling ring from Interpol Pretoria. He said that the women were smuggled into Spain via Africa, entering Spain at the North African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla. From Spain, they were going to be sent to Mexico for eventual entry into the United States. In regard to the women arrested, Botran said that one of the female detainees was a member of the organization, while the other four were victims. According to Botran, the four victims were being held in detention as undocumented immigrants, but the GOS recognized that they were victims and were providing them with social services. Botran said that the GOS was currently negotiating with the Government of China to return the women to China within the forty day detention limit established by Spanish law. However, Botran said that if the women cooperated with Spanish authorities and assisted in the investigation, it was possible that they could be granted residency and remain in Spain, if they so chose.

AGUIRRE